

community and the trust of the people. He has developed intimate relationships with many of the residents and, to many, he is like a member of their family.

Through Bob's leadership, SACCC became known as the top grassroots community organization in the Chicagoland area. Bob was always a great strategist, but the members, like Mr. Ed Bailey, Mrs. Irene Norwood, Mrs. Lillian Drummond, and Mr. George Lawson, were the voices.

Many people don't know it, but it was SACCC who led community reinvestment. It was SACCC who organized senior citizens. It was SACCC who led the fight for LIHEAP. It was SACCC who kept the Austin Bank on its toes. It was SACCC who united block clubs. It was SACCC who got people to join local school councils. And it was SACCC who got churches to open their doors for community meetings.

I have been in buildings with Bob where there was no heat. I have been in homes where there was no food. I have been on streets where there were no lights. I have been with Bob in allies where there was no hope. I have been with Bob and families after their relatives were shot.

Bob has worked to bring help to the helpless and hope to the hopeless. Bob VonDrasek, you are a good man, and I thank you and your family, your wife and children, for what you have meant to our community and to our world.

True soldiers are always reluctant to come off the battlefield, but there comes a time when we must put away our swords and shields to practice war no more. When that time comes, Bob, just know that you have made a difference. When you came to south Austin, newspapers were writing that it would be the next big slum. They did not know you and they did not know the people of south Austin. South Austin is not a slum. It is a vibrant, forward-thinking, and forward-moving community.

Bob, you have done the Master's work. You have fed the hungry, clothed the naked, brought hope to the hopeless, and help to the helpless. You have lifted spirits and you have taught people how to love, how to live, and how to work together.

I close, Bob, by leaving these words with, and for, you.

If when you give the best of your service, telling the world that the Savior is come, be not dismayed when men don't believe you, He understands, and will say, "Well done."

Oh, when I come to the end of my journey, weary of life and the battle is won, carrying the staff and the cross of redemption, He'll understand, and say, "Well done."

If when this life of labor is ended, and the reward of the race you have run, oh, the sweet rest prepared for faithful, will be His blest and final, "Well done."

But if you try and fail in your trying, hands sore and scarred from the work you've begun, take up your cross, run quickly to meet Him, He'll understand, He'll say, "Well done."

#### SERBIA AND AMERICA—100 YEARS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, 100 years ago, in 1918, President Woodrow Wilson declared July 28 as a National Day of Prayer for the Serbian people.

This was during World War I, the war to end all wars. American doughboys and leathernecks had arrived on the western front, holding the line against Germany's last offensive before it collapsed.

Meanwhile, the Serbian people were suffering under occupation by the central powers, who had launched a brutal invasion of Serbia.

Mr. Speaker, during World War I, one in four Serbian people were killed during that war. But the Serbian army had survived the invasion and was fighting alongside our allies to liberate their home. They were reinforced by many Serbian-Americans, who had returned to Europe to help their brothers.

President Wilson wanted America to honor the sacrifices of the Serbian people. In a speech marking the invasion of Serbia by the central powers, he said of the Serbians:

Nobly did they respond. So valiantly and courageous did they oppose the forces of a country ten times greater in population and resources. . . . While their territory has been devastated and their homes despoiled, the spirit of the Serbian people has not been broken.

As a Texan, I admire such defiance against overwhelming odds.

On that special day, President Wilson ordered a rare recognition to a foreign ally, by having the Serbian flag raised over the White House. That recognition had only occurred one other time in American history.

The spirit of brotherhood between the Americans and the Serbians, fighting shoulder to shoulder against tyranny, did not end there.

One of the most meaningful stories for Americans is the Halyard Mission during the dark days of the Second World War. Despite being under Nazi occupation, the Serbian people demonstrated their remarkable bravery once again, saving the lives of hundreds of Americans in the largest rescue operation of American airmen in history.

In 1944, American bombers were flying frequent missions to strike Germany's vital oil supplies in Romania as a part of the allied advance into Europe. The 15th Air Force led this effort by launching 20,000 sorties into Eastern Europe, with many of the missions flying over Nazi-occupied Yugoslavia. As many as 1,500 pilots and airmen were shot down during these air raids.

Serbian, who had been resisting Nazi forces since 1941, risked their own lives to rescue American aircrews in Yugoslavia and hide them from patrolling Nazis. These brave and noble Serbians cared for and protected Americans and allied pilots.

In August of 1944, the allied forces, including the 15th Air Force and the

Office of Strategic Services, devised a daring operation to evacuate hundreds of allied pilots being sheltered by the Serbian resistance in Nazi-occupied Yugoslavia. American aircraft flew into enemy territory and evacuated 500 airmen from the airfield built and protected by local Serbians near the village of Pranjani.

For over 60 years, this operation was kept secret from the American people. But now we can remember the courage of our Serbian friends and their stand against the Nazis.

Here, Mr. Speaker, is a photograph taken by the Serbian resistance, taking Americans who had been shot down in Serbia and taking them to the airfield, where they would be returned back to the American lines.

George Dudich, the father of my chief of staff, Elaine Dudich Stolze, when I was a judge in Texas, rescued many Americans who had been shot down in occupied Yugoslavia.

All these years later, we remain committed to the cause of freedom for both nations. We should work together to preserve each other's security.

The United States is now working with Serbia to improve its democracy, an independent judiciary, and fight corruption. A democratic Serbia with a strong rule of law is in America's interests and Serbia's.

We are united in keeping the hungry Russian bear from interfering in domestic affairs in Serbia. Russian disinformation efforts are designed to keep Serbia in its sphere of influence and poison our relationship. Nevertheless, Serbia's integration to the west has continued to move forward.

In 2006, Serbia joined NATO's Partnership for Peace program and, in 2015, signed an Individual Partnership Action Plan with the alliance to strengthen cooperation. And recently, the European Union has announced that Serbia would join the EU as early as 2025.

The prime minister and foreign minister of Serbia and numerous Serbs are in the Capitol today to promote U.S. Serbian relations.

So on this 100th anniversary of President Wilson's speech about the courageous Serbs of World War I, we reaffirm our joint partnership and friendship and a quest for liberty.

And that is just the way it is.

#### HONORING THE VICTIMS OF THE OCTOBER 1 SHOOTING IN LAS VEGAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. KIHUEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIHUEN. Mr. Speaker, it has been 297 days since the worst mass shooting in U.S. history.

On October 1, 2017, 58 people were senselessly murdered at the Harvest Music Festival in Las Vegas, in my hometown, and more than 500 people were injured.

I still remember that day like it was yesterday. I remember going to Sunrise

Hospital and seeing 194 victims who had been shot or injured.

Since October 1, I have come to the House floor 58 times to honor each of the victims and to share their stories. For the last 9 months, my colleagues have listened to 58 separate speeches, and have looked at the pictures of the 58 victims. These stories have been met with silence by the majority.

Since October 1, members of the Nevada delegation have asked to, at least, hold a hearing on bump stocks, the device that contributed to the massive carnage in Las Vegas. Our letters have been met with silence by the majority.

Since October 1, Democrats, and a few Republicans, have introduced no less than 30 bills to combat gun violence in our country, yet these bills have been met with silence by the majority.

Since October 1, there have been more mass shootings in the U.S., including at the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas; at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida; and at the Capital Gazette in Annapolis, Maryland. These mass shootings have been met with silence by the majority.

At what point are my colleagues in Congress going to stop being silent?

At what point are they going to say: We have to do something; we have to take action?

The United States is in the middle of a gun epidemic. Every day, 96 Americans, Mr. Speaker, are killed by gun violence. Americans are 25 times more likely to be murdered with a gun than people in other developed countries.

Americans can no longer feel safe at churches, concerts, movie theaters, work, military bases, nightclubs, restaurants, shopping malls, grocery stores, baseball fields, congressional baseball fields, and, even worse, our children are no longer safe at school.

Since 2009, there have been 288 school shootings in the U.S. Today, little kids are afraid to wear light-up shoes to school because a gunman could see them when they have to hide for their life.

From the time of the mass shooting at Sandy Hook to the mass shooting at Parkland, the House of Representatives has held more than 40 moments of silence related to gun violence. However, in that same time, the majority refuses to consider any real piece of legislation, hold any hearings, or take any action that could reduce this gun violence epidemic.

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And despite bipartisan support in this body to ban bump stocks, implement universal background checks, limit high-capacity magazines, or ban assault weapons, my colleagues say that nothing can be done to prevent gun violence in America. If that is true, why is the United States the only developed country that has this problem?

The truth is we can do something. We can take action. My Republican col-

leagues can put the American gun lobby first and the NRA and gun manufacturers, but the American people come first. We have to listen to the American people. We can pass bipartisan and commonsense solutions to prevent more shootings and to save more lives.

To my fellow Nevadans and Americans, I want you to know that, despite these roadblocks, we will keep fighting. Every day there are people here in Congress working tirelessly to make our country safer. Every day we are moved by your rallying cries and your stories; and every day, we will fight to end the gun violence epidemic in the United States.

#### MEMORIALIZING THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, BLACKSBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, July 25, 2018, in our Nation's Capitol to formally memorialize the history of the First Baptist Church located in Blacksburg, South Carolina.

First Baptist Church of Blacksburg was originally called the Berea Baptist Church, organized over 146 years ago, on December 4, 1876. The original structure was located near the corner of Highway 29 and Mountain Street, near the old Berea cemetery. This building was used as a church, schoolhouse, and community meeting hall. The first people to be baptized in the original building were Mrs. Sally Little and Mattie Bridges.

The first mention of building a new church facility was the years 1906 through 1909, under the pastorate of the Reverend B.L. Hoke. A committee was formed to search for land to build the new church.

During the pastorate of Reverend C.W. Payseur, property located on the corner of Cherokee and Rutherford Streets was purchased from Mr. D.D. Gaston for \$500; and in the spring of 1912, construction began on the new building. The records indicate that W.A. Blalock and A.M. Bridges broke the first dirt, and D.A. Gold placed the first brick, with Miss Emma Cornwell placing the first mortar for the bricks.

The first service in the new church facility was held over 105 years ago in June 1913, and the name of the church was officially changed from the Berea Baptist Church to the First Baptist Church of Blacksburg. The first person to be baptized in the new building was Mr. Ben Ramseur.

In 1922, over 96 years ago, a house and 6 acres of land owned by Mr. Tracy Hardin was donated for the purposes of building a church parsonage, and in June of 1929, the church began construction on the first Sunday school rooms at a cost of \$2,300.

The property behind the existing educational building as it sits today was

purchased during the years between 1941 and 1950, and a new building fund was started. The church broke ground on the new building at a cost of \$87,500; and on Sunday, June 24, 1956, which was over 62 years ago, the church celebrated homecoming, with "Dinner on the Grounds" in the new social hall downstairs.

On June 11, 1961, all debt was paid off and a note burning service was held to celebrate this accomplishment.

On July 5, 1962, the church voted to begin construction on the present sanctuary to replace the old one which, at the time, had been destroyed. The committee overseeing the construction was comprised of 10 members representing each of the resident families.

The new sanctuary was completed in 1963 at a total cost of \$74,735, and the debt was paid off on May 2, 1979.

The building of the new parsonage located at 108 Lenzer Circle began in the 1970s and was completed in February of 1972. The debt was paid off, and the official burning service was held on February 23, 1975, to celebrate this accomplishment of paying off the debt.

In October of 1976, the church voted to sell the old parsonage and purchase the entire land located inside Lenzer Circle for a future recreational facility.

On December 1, 1993, the church purchased the property and buildings immediately next to the existing church sanctuary at a cost of \$35,000, with the debt paid in full on January 16, 1998.

The next major renovation and building came in 1995, where the church reaffirmed the idea of seeking to build a recreational facility beside the existing church sanctuary; and in June of 1996, the old grocery store known as the Sara Wilkins property was demolished to make way for the new construction.

In 1997, renovations and repairs were made to the existing educational building and exterior of the sanctuary, along with a new Allen organ for the sanctuary.

The construction of the new Family Life Center began in August of 1999, for a total cost of \$520,000, with the church only borrowing \$60,000. The building was completed and the dedication held in May of 2000, and the remaining debt was paid off in 2001.

In July of 2001, the church purchased the old library building located behind the existing sanctuary and education building where the church offices exist today.

The last renovations to the present sanctuary were renovated in 2014.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to memorialize the 142-year history of the First Baptist Church of Blacksburg, which was organized on December 4, 1876, as we worship today in 2018, with the core mission being, then and now, service to Jesus Christ and the faithful teachings of the Christian Gospel.

WITHOUT THE RUSSIANS, TRUMP  
WOULDN'T HAVE WON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from